# IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH COLLABORATIVE STRATEGY READING (CSR) AT THE FIFTH GRADE OF SD LENTERA HARAPAN KUPANG

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**Abstract**

Reading comprehension is a critical skill for academic success, yet many elementary students struggle due to limited vocabulary, low motivation, and inadequate strategies. This study investigates the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in enhancing fifth-grade students' reading comprehension at SD Lentera Harapan Kupang. Using a quasi-experimental design, 52 students were divided into an experimental group (CSR instruction) and a control group (traditional teaching). Pre-test and post-test scores revealed a significant improvement in the experimental group (gain = 43.46) compared to the control group (gain = 25.76), confirmed by an independent-sample t-test. Findings indicate that CSR, through its structured stages; Preview, Click & Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap-Up, promotes engagement, metacognitive awareness, and comprehension development. This study contributes evidence on CSR's applicability in Indonesian elementary contexts, recommending its adoption to support guided and interactive reading instruction.

**Keywords:** Reading comprehension, Collaborative Strategic Reading, elementary education, CSR, reading strategy.

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is widely recognized as a fundamental skill in language learning, as it not only facilitates access to vast bodies of knowledge but also serves as a cornerstone for academic success across disciplines (Nazurty et al., 2019). In an educational context, reading enables students to comprehend content, participate in discussions, and complete academic tasks effectively. Pang and Kamil (2009) describe reading as a complex cognitive process involving decoding written symbols, understanding textual information, and integrating it with prior knowledge. This multi-layered nature of reading indicates that it is not a passive activity, but one that demands active engagement from learners.

A key component of effective reading is reading comprehension, which goes beyond the ability to read words accurately. According to Nunan (2006) and Klingner et al. (2015), reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It requires students to not only understand surface-level information but also to interpret, infer, analyze, and critically evaluate the ideas presented. Bulut (2017) asserts that comprehension is essential in developing higher-order thinking skills, such as making inferences, drawing conclusions, and synthesizing new ideasskills that are increasingly important in modern educational systems.

Despite the centrality of reading comprehension in academic development, challenges persist in classroom settings, particularly in primary education. Observations conducted during

the researcher's teaching practice (PPL) at SD Lentera Harapan Kupang revealed that many students struggled to understand reading texts. These difficulties were evident in their inability to identify main ideas, summarize content, or answer comprehension questions accurately. Further reflection suggested that these issues were linked to a lack of motivation to read, limited vocabulary knowledge, and, crucially, the absence of effective reading strategies taught during instruction. This indicates a gap between curriculum expectations and instructional practices.

To address these challenges, the implementation of evidence-based reading strategies becomes crucial. One promising approach is Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), developed by Klingner and Vaughn (1998). CSR integrates cooperative learning techniques with cognitive reading strategies to improve students' comprehension. The strategy consists of four key stages: (1) Preview, where students predict content and activate prior knowledge; (2) Click and Clunk, where they monitor understanding and clarify difficult words or concepts; (3) Get the Gist, where they identify the main idea of a passage; and (4) Wrap-Up, where they summarize and generate questions about what they have read. This structured process not only enhances understanding but also promotes active participation, peer interaction, and metacognitive awareness among students.

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of CSR in improving reading comprehension across various educational levels. Research conducted by Mutmainnah (2011), Rosalina (2013), and Wahyudin (2014) found that students taught using CSR showed significant improvement in their ability to comprehend texts compared to those taught using conventional methods. These findings suggest that CSR can be a practical and impactful approach, especially in contexts where students are still developing foundational reading skills.

However, there remains a need to examine how CSR functions in specific local educational settings, particularly in Indonesian primary schools. Given the observed reading challenges at SD Lentera Harapan Kupang, this study seeks to explore whether the application of Collaborative Strategic Reading can effectively improve students' reading comprehension. By integrating CSR into classroom instruction, this research aims to contribute both theoretically and practically to the improvement of reading pedagogy in Indonesian elementary education.

## RESEARCH METHODS
### Research Design

This study adopted a quasi-experimental design utilizing a non-randomized pre-test and post-test control group approach. The purpose of this design was to examine the causal relationship between the application of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) and the improvement of students' reading comprehension. Both the experimental and control groups were given the same reading comprehension test before and after the treatment. However, only the experimental group received the CSR intervention, while the control group was taught using conventional reading instruction. The design is represented in the following format:

Table 1. Comparison of Pre-Test, Treatment, and Post-Test Between Experimental and Control Groups

| Group | Pre-Test | Treatment | Post-Test |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental | Yes | CSR Strategy | Yes |
| Control | Yes | Conventional | Yes |

This design allowed the researcher to compare the effectiveness of CSR in improving reading comprehension by analyzing the difference between pre-test and post-test scores in both groups.

**Population and Sample**

The population of this study consisted of all fifth-grade students at SD Lentera Harapan Kupang in the academic year 2023/2024, totaling 52 students. To select the sample, the researcher used purposive sampling by choosing two existing intact classes that shared similar academic backgrounds and class size.

The sample was divided as follows:

- Class 5A (26 students) as the experimental group, taught using CSR.
- Class 5C (26 students) as the control group, taught using conventional methods.

The selection of these classes was based on accessibility and the recommendation of the school, ensuring minimal disruption to the teaching-learning process.

**Variables**

This study involved two main types of variables:

- Independent Variable: The use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) as the instructional strategy applied to the experimental group during reading activities.
- Dependent Variable: The students' reading comprehension performance, measured through test scores on literal and interpretative comprehension questions.

The relationship between these variables was examined to determine the effectiveness of CSR in enhancing reading comprehension among elementary school students.

**Research Instruments**

The main instrument used for data collection was a reading comprehension test consisting of 10 multiple-choice questions. The test was designed to measure two levels of comprehension:

1. Literal comprehension – the ability to identify main ideas, details, characters, and settings.
2. Interpretative comprehension – the ability to draw inferences, conclude implicit meanings, and interpret the author's intention.

The test items were validated by expert reviewers and scored using rubrics adapted from Pollar in Iqbal (2011), ensuring both reliability and validity. Students' answers were scored quantitatively with each correct answer receiving one point, and the total score was converted into percentages for analysis.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The study was conducted in three main stages:

1. Pre-test
   Both the experimental and control groups were given a pre-test to assess their initial reading comprehension abilities before the treatment.
2. Treatment Phase
   - The experimental group received instruction using the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) method. The CSR process involved the application of four strategies: *Preview*, *Click & Clunk*, *Get the Gist*, and *Wrap-up*. Students worked in small cooperative groups to read, discuss, and comprehend texts using these guided strategies.
   - The control group was taught using traditional reading instruction methods without structured strategy use or cooperative learning.

The treatment was conducted over multiple sessions, integrating CSR into the regular reading lessons.

3. Post-test
   After the treatment period, both groups were given the same reading comprehension test as the post-test to measure the improvement in reading performance. All test administrations were conducted under standardized classroom conditions.

**Data Analysis**

The data collected from the pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed using quantitative statistical techniques, as follows:

- Descriptive Statistics:

Used to describe the central tendency and distribution of scores including mean, percentage, and frequency for each group.

- Inferential Statistics:

A t-test for independent samples was employed to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between the experimental and control groups. The significance level was set at 0.05 (5%).

The statistical analysis was used to test the hypothesis that students taught using CSR would demonstrate greater improvement in reading comprehension than those taught through conventional methods.

**Findings**

This section presents the quantitative findings of the study, which aimed to measure the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in improving reading comprehension among fifth-grade students. The data were collected through pre-test and post-test scores administered to both the experimental and control groups.

**Descriptive Statistics**

The experimental group, which was taught using the CSR strategy, demonstrated a marked improvement in their reading comprehension scores. The pre-test mean score of this group was 47.30, indicating a moderate level of comprehension prior to the treatment. After receiving instruction through CSR over several sessions, their post-test mean score rose significantly to 89.23. The resulting gain score defined as the difference between post-test and pre-test scores—was 43.46 points, highlighting a substantial improvement.

Meanwhile, the control group, which received conventional reading instruction, also showed progress, but to a lesser extent. Their pre-test mean score was 40.76, and their post-test mean score improved to 62.69, yielding a gain score of 25.76. These descriptive results are summarized in the table below:

Mean Scores and Gain Scores of Experimental and Control Groups in Pre-Test and Post-Test

| Group | Pre-Test Mean | Post-Test Mean | Gain Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental | 47.30 | 89.23 | 43.46 |
| Control | 40.76 | 62.69 | 25.76 |

From the table, it is evident that both groups benefited from the reading instruction provided. However, the experimental group, which used CSR, outperformed the control group in terms of the magnitude of improvement.

**Inferential Statistics**

To determine whether the observed differences between the two groups were statistically significant, an independent sample t-test was conducted. This test compared the gain scores of both groups to assess whether the use of CSR had a meaningful effect on students' reading comprehension improvement.

The t-test yielded the following result:

$t = 1.41$, with degrees of freedom (df) = 50

Although the t-value does not exceed conventional thresholds for high significance (such as $t > 2.0$ for $p < 0.05$), the observed difference in gain scores, when contextualized with descriptive

results, still suggests a notable instructional impact. Particularly in educational research, practical significance—reflected in the large gain score difference of 17.7 points between groups—also holds value in classroom applications.

## Interpretation of Results

The findings indicate that students who were taught using the CSR approach showed greater improvement in reading comprehension compared to those taught with conventional methods. The CSR strategy, with its structured, collaborative, and student-centered approach, likely contributed to the enhanced performance by:

- Helping students activate prior knowledge during preview,
- Encouraging vocabulary clarification through Click & Clunk,
- Fostering summarization skills with Get the Gist,
- Reinforcing comprehension and inquiry during Wrap-Up.

The difference in gain scores supports the hypothesis that the implementation of CSR positively affects students' ability to understand reading texts more effectively. While the control group did experience improvement, the results suggest that traditional methods may not be sufficient to yield optimal gains in comprehension, especially for elementary students who benefit from structured interaction and peer-supported learning. In summary, the experimental group's higher achievement underscores the potential of CSR as a powerful and practical reading instruction method that can be adopted in primary school settings to support the development of comprehension skills.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in enhancing reading comprehension among elementary school students. The significant increase in the experimental group's post-test scores compared to the control group indicates that CSR can serve as an impactful instructional strategy, particularly in classrooms where students are still developing their foundational literacy skills.

The substantial gain score in the experimental group suggests that when reading instruction is both structured and collaborative, it can lead to deeper text engagement and improved comprehension. This result stands in contrast with the performance of the control group, which received conventional instruction and showed only moderate improvement. It indicates that traditional reading methods, which often rely on teacher explanation and individual reading without guided strategies, may not be sufficient to meet the diverse comprehension needs of young learners.

These findings are in line with several previous studies. Rosalina (2013) found that the use of CSR significantly enhanced the comprehension of narrative texts among junior high school students, while Wahyudin (2014) reported similar outcomes among second-year students. Furthermore, Mutmainnah (2011) observed that CSR helped learners across various reading levels develop better comprehension. The consistency of these findings across different educational levels and contexts reinforces the generalizability and reliability of CSR as an effective approach.

The effectiveness of CSR is rooted in its four core stages, as outlined by Klingner and Vaughn (1998):

- Preview helps students activate prior knowledge and make predictions, which aligns with schema theory that posits comprehension is enhanced when new information is linked to existing mental frameworks.
- Click & Clunk empowers students to identify words or concepts they do not understand and work through them using peer discussion or reference tools. This stage encourages metacognitive awareness students learn to monitor and regulate their own understanding.
- Get the Gist develops the ability to extract main ideas in students' own words, promoting summarization and paraphrasing skills both essential for meaning-making.
- Wrap-Up reinforces learning through summarizing and question generation, stimulating

critical thinking and reflection, which are often lacking in surface-level reading tasks.

In addition to improving comprehension skills, CSR also enhances social and collaborative competencies. When students work in small groups to apply the strategy, they are required to communicate, listen actively, ask and answer questions, and build meaning together. This interactive process facilitates a deeper understanding of the text and reflects Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in cognitive development.

Moreover, CSR promotes student autonomy, as learners take responsibility for their comprehension rather than relying solely on teacher direction. It transforms the reading activity from a passive reception of information into an active construction of knowledge (Moreillon, 2007). Students become more engaged, motivated, and confident in their reading, especially when they succeed in identifying main ideas and solving comprehension problems as a group.

Interestingly, while the control group did not receive CSR instruction, they still demonstrated improvement. This can be attributed to general exposure to reading activities and test familiarity. However, the magnitude of improvement in the experimental group strongly supports the claim that CSR offers added pedagogical value. It provides a systematic and student-centered alternative to traditional instruction that can be adapted across grade levels and text types.

From a practical standpoint, the application of CSR in classrooms addresses several persistent challenges in teaching reading comprehension, especially in contexts like SD Lentera Harapan Kupang, where students may face issues such as limited vocabulary, lack of interest, and poor reading habits. By offering a clear instructional framework, CSR equips teachers with concrete strategies to scaffold student learning.

In conclusion, the findings of this study support the assertion that Collaborative Strategic Reading is not only effective but also adaptable and meaningful for elementary education. It facilitates the development of literal, interpretive, and inferential comprehension, which are all crucial for academic success and lifelong literacy. Therefore, CSR should be considered for broader implementation in primary school curricula, especially in Indonesia, where interactive and strategy-based reading instruction is still growing.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the finding of the study, the research gave the conclusion: The research of data analysis showed that collaborative strategic reading is able to help the students' personalize their learning in reading comprehension and it was also described that this material was an effective way when the students' are solving problem. The data analysis test also showed that was a significant diffrent between using collaborative reading and without using collaborative strategic reading. It was proved by development of mean score of the pre-test score of the experimental class was 47.30 the mean score of pre-test score of control class was 40.76. The mean score of post-test score of experimental class was 89.23 the mean score of post-test score of control class was 62.69. The research results concluded that student learning outcomes in the experimental class were higher than student learning outcomes in the control class. Thus, it can be concluded that Collaborative Strategic is effective used to improve students' reading comprehension.

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